

The Omen

"celebrating its 10th anniversary on its 11th"
May 14, 2004 Volume 22, Issue 4



Policy

The Omen is Hampshire's longest-running bi-weekly publication, established by Stephanie Cole in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus, administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion. Everything the Omen receives, provided it is sent from a member of the Hampshire community, will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Although we find such things amusing and entertaining for countless hours, it is just not an option in this forum. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously damages a person's reputation.

The Omen will not edit anything you write (except spelling and grammar). You must sign your real name (no anonymous submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the Omen do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

There is no Omen staff, save those positions of editor-in-chief and layout editor. To qualify for community service you must be a consistent contributor and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday after release of an issue in the Kiva at 9PM. Everyone, everywhere, living or dead, should come.

The Omen loves you.

The Omen

volume 22, number 7
may 14, 2004

layout and editing

Rachael Abed
Rebecca Costello
Beth Day
Alli Hartley
Mark Hugo
Renee Kinchla
Karl Moore
Abby Ohlheiser
Jeffrey Paternostro
Ben Rosen-White
Cheryl Van Laak

Eatin'
Writin'
Fetchin'
Buyin', Drinkin'
Bub's Hat Wearin'
Bakin'
Yo Mama
Actual Work
Crib Death
Bakin'
Carryin'

cover design by Nickey Robare
back cover by Beth Day

Submissions are due **Saturdays before 5pm**. You can submit by diskette (Mac or IBM) in rich text or plain text format, and typed hard copies will also be accepted, reluctantly. Label your disks well and they will get back to you. Get your stuff to Jeffrey Paternostro, **Prescott 98A, x5141**. You may also use e-mail. Send e-mail submissions to **jip00@hampshire.edu**.

And be sure to read our policy box above before submitting.

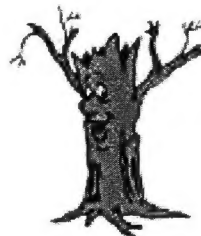
The Official Omen Haiku

Views in The Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

If I pass out in a
forest, and throw up,
does it make a sound?



**Quote attributed to
Alli Hartley, DIV FREE**

(Guest)

Editorial

The Day the Omen Turned 10

(Beth begins:)

I will warn you all first of all that I'm a little drunk when I'm writing this. After a year, Rebecca and the associated staff of the Omen have finally gotten the pictures developed from the Omen BBQ that I poured my blood, sweat, and tears into a year ago. So I thought I'd tell you the story of the Omen BBQ from the perspective of the girl who planned the whole shindig with the help of Justin Philpot and the inspiration of many others.

It all started in the spring of 2002. I was made a signer, Michael Zole was editor. In the spring of '02, having some kind of celebration inviting old Omen alumni to come back was this idea we'd been talking about for a while. The final form of this celebration was never decided, but in the passing the torch from one year to the next, it was kind of expected that the next year would plan said celebration in honor of 10 years of the Omen, the campus' longest running publication (without changing its name that is).

So that first year, I never realized that becoming an Omen signer meant becoming the Omen's bitch. I had become in charge of archiving and advertising for the Omen. Little did I know that under Zole as editor that I would become General PR person for the Omen in addition to being a Div III as well as a Dakin Intern and the myriad of responsibilities I otherwise had.

Well, as much as I love Zole, planning for a 10 year Omen Anniversary celebration never happened under him. He faded into the background Div III provides and editorship was passed to one Justin Philpot, who had previously written articles that definitely lived up to editorial

Contents

Front cover photo:

All past Omen signers attending the
10th anniversary BBQ, May 2003

Editorial	3
Dialogue on Drugs	4
Final Paper Topics	5
Alli's Final Article	6
Rebecca's Final Article	7
Yo Mama Jokes: She Liked Your Div III	10
10th Anniversary Photos	14
A Last Word	15

Fabulous
new design thanks
to Nickey Robare!

quality.

I was happy to serve as the Omen's bitch as long as it didn't completely fuck over my Div III, and I found a much more supportive editor in Justin. Despite much anxiety in planning the final date and worrying about whether we had set aside much time for planning, we decided on May 3rd. At first we were worried about the date because Merrill was supposed to have a BBQ on the same day, But then we thought of ways that would set the Omen BBQ apart. It

Continued on pg. 11

Dialogue on Drugs at Hampshire

by Shalin Scupham

Setting: A clearing in the forest, at Hampshire. Alfonzo has an eyepatch and a parrot on his shoulder; Bertucci has a monacle and a corncob pipe.

Alfonzo: "The Battlements of Celestial Fire" is not a good vigilante cult name.

Bertucci: Rather, it is a good band name.

A: Stupid morons. They should have consulted us.

B: How about "The League of Justice" or "Avengers For Those Who Just Can't Say No."

A: How about "Students for Mandatory Minimum Sentencing" or "The Society of Let's Just Put All The Bad People In Jail."

B: How about "The Terrorists", since things are pretty fucking tense around here lately.

A: But seriously, drug pushers are bad.

B: What if, hypothetically, a drug pusher knew somebody with a history of substance abuse who was in rehabilitation-

A: And said drug pusher gave this girl free cocaine for his or her own financial aid?

B: Disgusting?

A: Atrocious!

B: Scandalous?

A: Nerve-racking.

B: But who do these punks think they are? Batman?

A: Batman, you know, he was a dark avenger, but he also had really intense guilt about killing criminals.

B: And I wonder what will happen to the pusherman...

A: His life probably really sucks now.

B: I wonder how he'll go to college now.

A: I wonder if he'll ever be able to get enough education to get a job that pays more than drug pushing.

B: I wonder if he'll go to jail. Because that's a great place to learn how to sell drugs better.

A: Yeah, he mustn't have been a very good drug dealer if he got caught and shit.

B: Yeah, if you're going to sell drugs, you might as well do a good job.

A: Failure is his.

Enter Thom, bruised, battered, and bloody. He's gotten the shit kicked out of him.

Thom: Hi guys. I've decided that being a narc is no fun.

A: Hey, mob mentality wins again!

B: I love the Daily Jolt.

A: Yes, it is a victory for human dialogue everywhere.

B: The internet is a wonderful invention that brings people closer together.

T: I do not agree with that.

A: But, I mean, Thom, celestial fire?

B: Dude.

A: Go start a band that creates rock-operas.

T: Nah, the music industry is slanted against the album format now with the advent of mp3s.

B: Guess it's just all about pulling fire alarms and breaking in entry to rooms of strangely broken

human beings then, huh?

A: Well, wait now. Our well-washed friend, let's call him "D.W.", he wasn't all bad.

B: Subjectivist. I guess that makes sense, you know, for a fairly heavy drug user to be in to the idea that one's subjective reality is the most interesting thing about the world since that's all we have, and that since drugs alter said subjective reality in really interesting ways, they can serve as portals in to new ways of consciousness, of thought, of the way the universe works for that one person...

A: Dirty hippie. You just like smoking pot every day. I mean, you wear a monacle and smoke a corncob pipe. But that's not the point, is it?

B: The point is, that D.W. may have made that argument, and it's kind of an interesting worldview.

A: He was a human. He has feelings, I hear.

B: A family too.

A: And a criminal record.

B: Bummer.

A: But nobody is perfect...

B: I pick my nose.

A: My best friend is a regular at the methadone clinic.

B: I have a rape fantasy.

A: What I do with my mind and body is my business and my business alone.

B: Or something like that. Libertarian ideals are interesting to me.

T: But, he was evil!

A: So is the president, by my definition.

B: Truth is a subjective matter, friend. Read some Heidegger.

A: Yeah man, the way that truth is

relative to the experiences you've had and your social and political and cognitive climate, and how when the horizon of your personal universe moves somehow-

B: The truth moves with it.

T: But it's against the law, and the law is just.

A: We can shoot you.

T: We can get you arrested, dirty potheads. Especially you, Bertucci.

B: (conspicuously refrains from further dialogue with T, or others, because of paranoia and fear; holes up in his room and with a close circle of trusted friends out of paranoia and fear; stops going to class because he's so isolated in his drug-world; fails out of college; cries a lot; gets job at Wal-Mart; dies poor, forgotten, and lonely

at thirty three of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.)

A: Maybe fear isn't the best way to go about this.

T: I like laws.

Enter a Hamburger Cop, chasing a Hamburglar.

Hamburger Cop: I like arresting people.

Hamburglar: Woo-hoo! (snorts cocaine off A's nipple.)

H.C.: I buy pot from casual, friendly dealers and then send them to jail.

T: I like you.

A: Um.

Hamburglar: Woo-hoo! Hamburgers!

H.C.: I'll get you yet, vile meat-

eater!

Hamburglar: Woo-hoo!

Exeunt Hamburger Cop, Hamburglar

T: So yeah.

A: Yeah.

T: Maybe we can coexist here.

A: Maybe you can allow me to live my life the way I want to live it-

T: And you can do the same.

A: That might be doable.

T: No more getting kids arrested then, eh?

A: That would be great. No more getting real drunk and breaking windows and keeping you up late at night?

T: Okay.



FINAL PAPER TOPICS THAT I SHOULD HAVE CHOSEN INSTEAD OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE FOR MY TEXT, CANON, AND TRADITION CLASS

(I.E. THE AUTHOR PROCRASTINATED ON SAID PAPER BY READING McSWEENEY'S, AND IS NOW COMPELLED TO KNOCK OFF THEIR "LISTS" SECTION)

1. Holy Shit: A Paper on Martin Luther
2. Mr. Show's "Jeepers Creepers" and Jesus Christ: Superstar: A Comparative Perspective
3. The Story of My Own Spiritual Journey: An Autobiography in Haiku
4. God, Like, Totally Started all that Race, Class and Gender Shit with Noah's Sons.
5. Every Time A Bell Rings an Angel Gets His or Her Wings, But That Girl Who Hit Me in The Back of My Head During A Bell Choir Performance When I Was Five Didn't Even Give Me An Apology
6. Sweet Jesus: Dessert Ideas For the Blood And Body of Christ



by Abby Ohlheiser

Alli's Last Article - EVER

by Alli Hartley

As I wear my Div Free pin proudly and ring the bell without fear, I can look back at my life at Hampshire, things I wish I've done, things I wish I didn't do, people I wish I killed. After living in bitterness for so long, it's hard to look at Hampshire without seeing the glaring flaws: lack of faculty, lack of classes, activists fucking up everything from nudity to beer-pong. If I think hard, though, I think there are some things that remain close to my heart-besides my handle of Jim beam.

1. **Midnight Breakfast:** Granted, I haven't gone to midnight breakfast since I lived in the mods, but the general idea still is fantastic. Doing my Div three, all I wanted at 3 am was some pancakes and coffee. Going down a few flights of stairs is much better than having to drive to the Whately, especially when you are seated next to a group of truckers and their young son, carrying guns and wearing camoflauge. The idea of midnight breakfast reinforces the idea that we as college students never sleep. We gather like cattle, following the intern who bellows down our hall. We ravage the food and recede into our dorm rooms, just as awake as ever.

2. **That little depression** right next to FPH that turns into a lake after the rain: It's fucking beautiful. The best part is that it's so small. The Library lawn is right there, It's large and open. But the three or four trees surrounding that depression is intimate, like burrowing your face in someone's neck or the crook of their arm. When the depression is filled up with water it can be almost magical. But you know, not in a lame way.

3. **Free Condoms:** I don't think I need to explain this one. The thing I like about the free condoms at the various house offices is that whenever you ask for any; the house office people seem so happy for you. You never get that at the drugstores. There, the cashier tries not to look at you, or tries to act as awkwardly normal as possible. At Hampshire, the interns all light up; they can be useful and they know you're getting laid. Everybody wins.

4. **Lynn Miller's Tongue:** I took a class with Lynn Miller my second semester, and the image of his tongue has been burned in my memory like images from 'nam. Though, in a Tolkienesque way, our world is changing. All the gnomes and the elves and magical scary people are leaving; all the humans are left, Soon there will be people

who don't remember Lynn Miller's tongue wagging like some angry serpent. All that will be left is-G2. Maybe.

5. **Hampshire Gossip:** Most of the time this is a pain in the ass. But you gotta have a special place in your heart for something that allows you to tell your friend something and then a half an hour later have your ex-boyfriend in New York call you about it, the sensitive information having gone through no less than 5 people. In such a small community; everyone knows everyone; and consequently, everyone knows everything about you. You may not feel like gossip is morally right. You may even think it's catty. But when you walk up to someone, you can pretty much assume that they know at least a few things about you, including what you call your boyfriend when you're having sex, and the two or three people you'd like to be fucking instead. It makes starting a conversation a helluva lot easier.

Well, that's all I can think of right now. I'm about to leave, and this is my goodbye. I love my friends, I like my div 3, and I think that's all anyone could ask for.

Goodbye.



Rebecca's Last Article - EVER

by Rebecca Costello

Sometimes I look around at Hampshire students or alums, and I think about the day I decided to come to Hampshire: just about this time of year, five years ago (I took a year off after high school, which accounts for that extra). I had applied to a wide range of college choices, without thinking very hard about what I wanted. In fact, I realized in retrospect that all the colleges I applied to were ones that my older friends had either gone to or considered, even though being with them wasn't really a motivation. The only exception was Oberlin (because a rep came to my school and gave me a brochure). When the acceptance letters arrived (a surprising number, you'll know if you paid attention reading my last article) I actually had to make a decision.

I hate decisions. I hate them with all my heart. Right now I am in the midst of decisions about what I will do next year and where I will be, and already I can feel my stomach start to turn. It's a very uncomfortable feeling. I start thinking of all the things that hinge on this decision, and all of the unknowns that I will simply not be able to accurately weigh, and I feel sick. Obviously the college decision was going to affect a lot of my future and involved a lot of unknowns. Some

people do a lot of research - obsessive, even - about their college choice. Can you have a car? What are student groups like? Are there good vegetarian options? How many majors? I had done nothing of the sort. Basically, I'd been at a tour at each of the schools and an overnight at two. Hampshire was not one of the two.

I was able to rule out a couple of my lower choices, but had no idea what to do about the rest. By process of elimination, it came down to Hampshire and Smith - which had their accepted students' days the same weekend - although Bryn Mawr was still hovering in the background and I had to decide if I wanted to go to their accepted students' day the following weekend. I headed out to the Valley (although I had no idea it was called that) to try to sort things out. I went to Smith's day first. By far this was the college I knew the most about. I had been on an overnight stay there; I had talked to an extremely enthusiastic alum; I had been on a couple tours, and now I was attending that info/propaganda fest known as the accepted students day. Still, I had no idea.

I remember sitting in the hotel room with my mother that night, ready to cry. My sister was on the phone nagging me to decide if I was going to visit Bryn Mawr or not, because

she wanted to visit my aunt in Philadelphia. I had no idea if I wanted to visit, I had no idea where I wanted to go, and I didn't know what I was going to do. I said pleadingly to my mother, "Just tell me where to go and I'll go there! I don't know what I want!" She, of course, refused to tell me. I put my sister off another day. The next morning, we went to Hampshire. (We got lost, of course. My parents still get lost going to Hampshire. My mother once called me to tell me they'd gotten home but wondered, "How did we end up in, what's it called, South Hadley?")

I remember clearly two things that really sparked my enthusiasm for Hampshire. I went to one of the academic workshops, and the professor who was supposed to come had mixed up the time and wasn't there. (Yes, I know, an early warning.) But another professor who was around - I still don't remember who, just that it was a man from CS - said he'd step in, and led a Hampshire-style class about the singing dogs, asking for hypotheses about why they sang. It was in the East Lecture Hall, and we were all lounging on the steps - no chairs, no desks - participating in this discussion. It felt so friendly and informal. Second, I went to a student panel. I don't remember so clearly what they

Continued on pg. 8

said, just positive things about community and democracy. I ran into my mother after the panel and said, "I want to go to Hampshire." She said, "I was thinking it sounded like your kind of place." Everyone says, "You'll know what college you're supposed to go to. You'll just feel a click." I never believed it could happen to me, but it did.

Later that day I went and visited my friend who already went to Hampshire. He was playing video games in his bathrobe in his Greenwich mod and never stopped playing them the entire time I was there. (Anyone remember Fuzzy? I knew him as Matthew.) He was generally bitter and negative about Hampshire (ah, the bitter older student. Again, I didn't realize it at the time). I said well, it sounded like both the positives and the negatives were similar to the high school we had both attended - what was essentially a small Hampshire Junior - and I felt that if I could deal with the negatives of my current school, I could deal with them at Hampshire too.

I tend to put decisions off endlessly, until the absolute deadline has been reached. I had envisioned my college choice as that down-to-the-wire, FedEx-the-deposit-at-midnight scenario that a number of people more decisive than me have experienced. Getting home after visiting Hampshire and filling out all my reply cards well before the deadline was nothing short of a miracle to me. I knew what I wanted.

So. This rather long digression brings me back to my opener. Why? Because when I

look at people who have gone to Hampshire, I realized that at some point, they had to make the choice to be here. On some day, they heard or read or saw something that made them want to be here. I think about them sitting through a panel at accepted students day, thinking, "Yeah, sure, Hampshire. This sounds good." Or going on a tour and instantly loving it. Or carefully weighing the pros and cons the night before the deadline, and coming down on the side of Hampshire. Or maybe just not getting in anywhere else and thinking, "Well, why not." And I think, that's what brings us all together here. That one moment of "Yes". And I wonder, what reasons was it for? Obviously not everyone had the same reasons to be here as me. Maybe we had completely opposite reasons. I was thinking, "Ooh, community" and that guy living in C basement was thinking, "Great, solitude". But at some point we all thought that Hampshire would be the place for us to do - whatever. So when I look at people sometimes, I wonder what their whatever was. How did we all end up here, with our jumble of whatevers? How different are those whatevers?

As I reach the end of my four years here, I think, was it worth it? Did I come to the right college? Did I make the right choice? What were my whatevers?

I know everyone has regrets about their college choice at some point. The sophomore slump. We all know a very large group of people who have left Hampshire - sometimes this group is larger than

the group of those who have remained. I've asked the same questions we probably all have about whether I should stay. I've certainly had the issues with Hampshire that we all have, perhaps more so. (I'm still trying to get Anne Marie Casper to write an article about how the more involved you become with Hampshire, the more bitter you become, so the way to be happy is to be completely disconnected from the college).

Our student governance sucks. Still. The community? I don't care what Greg says - not so much. They put chairs and tables in the East Lecture hall - and bolted them down. I want to believe that the style of academics and the spirit of trust in students that also drew me here will continue. But I certainly don't feel that it's guaranteed.

A number of times, I've wondered, did I make the right choice that weekend in April of 1999? It was basically Smith vs. Hampshire. I've gotten a nice up-close view of What Could Have Been; I never took a class over there, but one of my best friends from high school went there and I would go over, hang out with her and her friends, go to their parties, and eat dinner (and lunch and snacks) from their dining room. I haven't gotten to see much of the academics, but I got a good feel for the community life there. It's probably exactly the kind of thing that I would have loved. Houses, traditions, organizations. Small communities and a large community. All the things that Hampshire doesn't have.

This article is becoming all

about, "Should I have come here?" That wasn't exactly the direction I meant it to go in. But I think it's a worthy question. It leads into other things that I also thought I was going to say. Should I have come here? If I knew all I do now, would I make the same choice over?

I had to answer this question actually, to Hampshire. They made me do it to get my commencement invitations and poster. I had to fill out an amazingly generic "Senior Survey", with questions about my GPA and whether I had lived in "residence halls" or "fraternity or sorority housing". One question I confronted was, basically, "Would you come here if you could do it all over again?" There was a range of five answers, from strongly yes to strongly no. I sat there and I thought for a minute. Then I chose the answer in the middle, Maybe.

See, I'm still not sure if this article is going quite the way I mean it to. You still think the question is, "Should I have come here?" And I've answered it: "Maybe". But what I really want to say is, it doesn't matter. This is where I have been for four years (minus a semester in Costa Rica). This is where I have invested my time and energy and dedication. I worked for Admissions, for god's sake. I answer "Maybe" and I still try to get people to come here, because I believe that this is or can be the right place, or at least a very right place, for some people and I want to help them find that out and help the rest choose wisely, choose away. I believe in Hampshire: this is where I've

chosen to believe in. There are good, wonderful things here that I enjoy. Today, for example, several people were walking around with a shopping cart full of free donuts that they had retrieved from a dumpster. People were walking by and grabbing donuts. I hang out in Cole sometimes and take a nap on the couch in the Div III nook; I love Natural Science and feel that it is the closest thing to what I was looking for when I came here. I like the people of Hampshire; when I actually get to interact with them, I love the other students. I have great friends here. I get a kick out of the Omen - one of our few longstanding traditions. Academically, I sometimes say, and think I believe, that I don't think I could have gotten a better education anywhere else.

The theme of many my articles this year may coalesce around the line from one of them earlier in the semester; something along the lines of, "Hampshire, stop jerking me around." Why has the bell rope remained completely fucked up ever since it was installed despite the combined efforts of multiple students and administrators? The most important thing about graduating and they still can't get it right after installing one that at least sounds good. Hampshire wants to improve retention, and apparently just now the administration is hearing the message we tried to hammer home three years ago: retention is not solvable with an academic first-year plan. Hampshire wants to improve alumni giving. I don't know a single person who feels

confident about Hampshire's ability to spend their money correctly, even if they did feel unequivocally positive enough about the college to give it.

I love Hampshire. There are so many things about it that are great. I've had a great time here. I owe it a lot. After all my agonizing, I really am very satisfied with my Div III. Those are enough for me to feel fine about my college choice. I just want anyone out there who's reading this to know that. But I also want anyone in a position to make change to also recognize that for a student like me - involved, graduating in four years, not a drug dealer or a flagrant litterer or a two a.m. screamer (except when Beth Day is visiting) - to answer "Maybe" is, at best, unfortunate.

Sometimes graduate articles are all about advice to the younger generation. And I feel like, so you won't get the wrong idea about what this article was about, I should give you some advice. Go ahead and get bitter, but in the right way. It should be a careful seasoning. Stay involved. Remember why you came here. Look for the good. Go to Midnight Breakfast. Go to the Sit-Down (it will always be the Sit-Down). Sit on the F4 balcony and spy on people. Build strange snow sculptures. Look at other people's strange snow sculptures. Write for the Omen. Run Midnight Breakfast. Edit the Omen. Don't read maudlin articles written by Div Frees on the night of the final deadline.

Have fun, Hampshire. I'm sure I'll be back to visit. But it will never be the same.



She Liked Your Div III

by Karl Moore

Yo mama's like a lightning bolt; she's on Harry Potter's face as we speak.

CREATE YOUR OWN!

Yo mama is so fat, you can put your ____ in her ____ and not ____ until 20__.

Yo mama got hit by a car and a bus and a train and the Space Shuttle.

Yo mama was made in China, but assembled with pride in the U.S.A.

Yo mama drinks milk with BGH... and she's FUCKING FINE. Activist assholes.

Yo mama melts at the sight of my penetrating male gaze, all a puddle on the floor and shit.

Yo mama has an undiagnosed chronic disease. No, I ain't telling you which one.

Yo mama's gender is ugly.

Yo mama impairs my ability to operate machinery - specifically this bone - er, wood-chipper here.

Yo mama said she was going to kill the president; or so went my memo to the Secret Service.

Yo mama's gonna draw a low number during the next military draft. UNLUCKY BITCH!

Yo mama's day was last week; I FORGOT!!!

Yo mama would really like you to call her right now, you self-centered fuck.

Yo mama fell off a truck. It was a CORPSE TRUCK!

Yo mama's so big, bitch has her own embassy. Yes, it's being protested.

Yo mama has a third nipple but not a third breast. What's up with that?

Yo mama's like a can of Red Bull: skinny, overpriced, and nasty-tasting.

Yo mama is quite dry, with notes of cherry, smoke and MY DICK!.

Yo mama has a low sperm count. Except on her face.



The Day the Omen Turned 10, Continued from pg. 3

came down to a roast whole pig and an open mike in which old Omen staffers and fans alike had the freedom to read or say whatever they wanted over a loudspeaker at the BBQ. Secretly we just wanted the roast pig because what was more ironic than a dead roast whole pig than at a ultra PETA/Vegan friendly campus like Hampshire College?

When I say I devoted my blood, sweat, and tears to the Omen, a big part of that involved the Omen BBQ. I made it my business to go through all the Old Omen issues and find the names of any persons who had been considered "Omen Staff." After making a list of these names, Justin and I bought really corny invitations to address to these people who were an important part of Omen history but most of us had never met.

Justin and I wrote an Invitation to each person I had discovered. From there I took the invitation to the alumni office to see what happened next. I have no way to tell you when I'm this drunk how much panning and making those invitation to alums meant to me. Especially to the many women involved in the Omen, after so many years of accusation of the Omen being a male-dominated thing. I wanted to meet these people, they were my heroes. In that way you've heard and read so many things about these people that had been built up.

I started to get back e-mails: people who were surprised and amused that the Omen had somehow managed to survive (to this day I'm amazed it had survived). It was absolutely fascinating to hear what the hell happened to old Omen people after the graduated. But the real excitement would be the day of the BBQ.

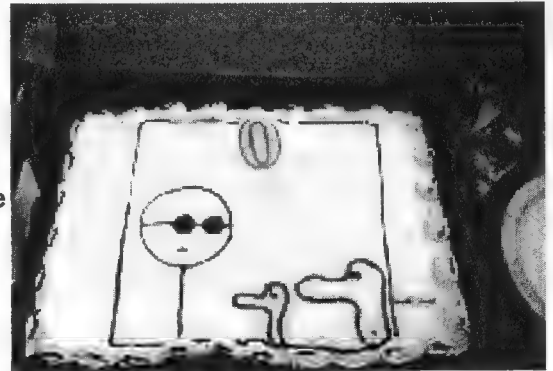
Unfortunately, the BBQ coincided with the day after my bell-ringing. A girl despite all of her commitments to the outside world deserves a day to celebrate her year of killing shrimp and getting horribly shamefully drunk with her closest friends. One of which was Justin who she had planned the following day with.

Somehow I managed to wake up the morning of May 3rd in order to make the vicious and half awake trip to Costco.

(Co-author's note: at this point Beth went to sleep, since she had to get up at 4:45 a.m. to get driven to the airport by yours truly. Now she's on her way back to Seattle, site of her post-graduate life. I will pick up the narrative, less drunkenly but with far fewer spelling mistakes to be corrected by yours truly.)



The roast pig reclines in the rear of Aaron's hatchback



Surly Boy, Melvin, and McCoy, rendered by Atkins and gracing one of the cakes

Justin and Beth had asked me, one of the few Omen-involved people with a car, and the only one with a Costco card, to help with shopping for the big day. We road-tripped down to Springfield and began the plunder. I kept looking doubtfully at the quantities of meat, buns, and other BBQ supplies that Justin was chucking into our multiple shopping carts, and asked him several times if he was sure that we'd actually use all this food. With the experience born of a former Dakin intern, he assured me that we would.

Phys Plant had very nicely set up tables and grills for us on the lawn by the Yurt, and Justin and Beth began setting up as I went over to Atkins to retrieve our cakes. I had



At the trough!

been there the previous day to attempt to describe our needs: one cake that said, "Happy 10th Anniversary Omen" and the other with a reproduction of a Surly Boy cartoon. I'll let you guess which one took longer to order. However, they did a great job and we returned triumphantly with two huge sheet cakes to accompany our copious quantities of food. We began firing up the grill. Aaron Buchsbaum, as the other car owner, had been detailed to retrieve the roast pig and returned with a blackened, foil-wrapped porcine that was anathema to my vegetarian eyes but still kind of fun to have. We set out boxes of the past Omen issues and the newly published 10 Year Anniversary/Greatest Hits issue. Now the only question was, who would show and how many?

First off, let me say that my surplus food worries were completely unfounded. Hampshire students proved themselves to once again be champion consumers of free food. The great thing was, a lot of them stuck around as we set up the loudspeakers and got ready for our "Omen Mike".

What was even more exciting was the number of alums who showed up, spanning basically all 10 years of Omen publishing. We knew many of them, or knew people who knew them, but there was a cluster of people sitting off to the side who clearly

stretched back beyond our ken. We were convinced that Stephanie Cole, founder of the Omen, was one of them. It was taking a while to get the loudspeakers set up, and we wanted to go over, let them know what was going on, and of course find out who they were. Beth and I went through a you-no-you-no-you chorus until I insisted that she had to do it, as she was organizer and signer, but that I would accompany her.



Stephanie Cole (far right) and other Omen founders

We traipsed over, and Beth introduced herself. Immediately one of the women introduced herself and Stephanie. We were excited. They were all very friendly and cool. It was awesome. That group included people who had also worked on the Omen from the beginning, including two who got married later.

The Omen Mike, too, was awesome. We kicked it off with introductions from Justin and Beth, and after that, in some kind of order, had Stephanie Cole and other old Omenites reminisce about the founding of the Omen, heard about the first Omen CRB, had various past signers and editors speak, and had people read favorite articles aloud.



Justin Philpot, then-editor, and former staffer Shaun Boyle tend the grill

I hate to use the phrase, but it was a magical afternoon. Learning about the Omen's founding was great. It turns out Stephanie Cole had written an article for the campus paper at the time (forgive me if I can't remember which of the dozen it was). Instead of publishing her article, they published an advice column about "womyn's

space" (she read it aloud to us, having saved it all these years). The final straw, though, was that it turned out to be written by some woman living in the Valley who wasn't even a Hampshire student.



Beth Day (Omen bitch) and Matthew Montgomery (Beth bitch) reigning over the burgers

Stephanie Cole decided to found her own damn paper. She introduced some her original crew, including the guy who stepped in the night of layout when their original layout editor did not come through.

Also great was the article reading. I have rarely laughed so hard. Do you know how funny "World's Worst Yo Mama Jokes" are read aloud on a sunny weekend afternoon in May, sitting with all your friends on the lawn, stomach full of barbecue? A group of people trekked back to the Pub Lab in Dakin to do damage to Beth's careful archiving by retrieving past issues with their favorite gems, and returned to read more. "An Open Letter to Thea Dobbs". "Joe and the Giant Penis". "The Omen Course Catalog Supplement".

After the Omen Mike, as the evening was coming on and it was getting chilly, we returned en masse to the Pub Lab to take photographs of all the Omen people crowded into that musty little room that has been the site of so much – well, something. Then it was time to say good-bye. I think Beth had developed kind of a hero worship/crush on Stephanie Cole at that point. I have to agree, that woman was pretty goddamn cool. Dude, she was an intellectual property lawyer with badass tattoos and red hair.

And she founded the Omen! I think it also helped that she was impressed with Beth's Div III (I don't think she was fully informed about shrimp killing).



Listening at the Omen Mike

the

Eventually, the party broke up. We cleaned up the BBQ leavings. The day was over.

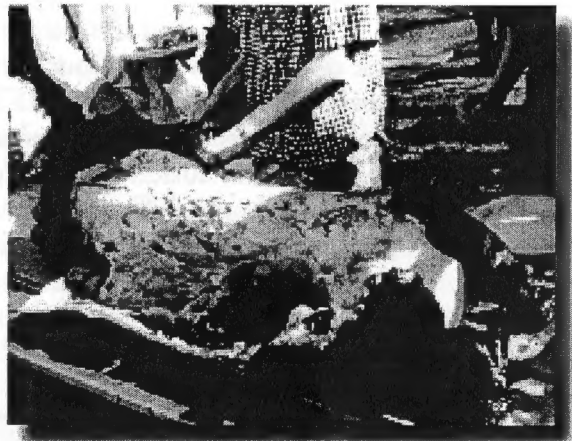
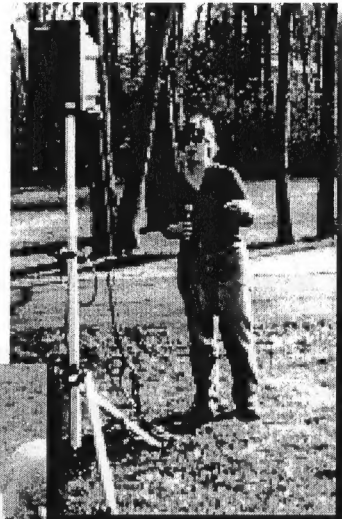
It's a day that I think should have been celebrated far more in the college than it was. What other student group on campus has lasted 11 years, now, without institutional support (e.g. the Cultural Center or Theatre Board), and then holds a reunion for which people who have been graduated for nearly a decade travel 10 hours or more? This is what Hampshire says it wants and needs: Tradition. Continuity. Connections.

The day of the Omen's 10th anniversary bash made me want to be one of the people who made this all possible, who sustained this kind of irreverent, often challenged but always necessary, campus tradition. It made me willing to stand up for that tradition by attending Council and All-Community meetings all last fall. It made me willing, if not always happy, to spend every other Saturday in the Pub Lab, helping make the nuts-and-bolts of publication happen. I think it should motivate other people to do the same. Your Face Here. Get involved and be at the Omen's 20th.



The old crowd heading out.

More Omen 10th Anniversary Photos



From the editorial by Justin Philpot in the 10th Anniversary Issue:

"The OMEN is reprinting an email we received after we'd sent out our invitations. It sums up a lot about the OMEN and why we decided to do what we did and plan a campus-wide birthday party. We thought it might be nice to have a party. You know, like a community.

Just got your note about the OMEN party in the mail...

So wait, are you telling me the OMEN is still publishing?! I had always assumed that it must have petered out some time after Jon Land graduated...

I wish I could drop everything and fly to Amherst for this, it would be great, but I can't.

I guess I was there right at the beginning, if only by accident of social circle. I wish I still had a copy of the flyer Stephanie Cole put out when she started the whole thing, which I believe had a Citizen Kane quote on it to the effect of 'I thought I'd like to run a newspaper.'

Surprisingly enough, I'm actually a reporter for a 'real' (if small) paper these days and living in San Francisco. Would be happy to hear or see anyone who wants to drop a line or drop in.

Sara Gaiser (formerly ssgF92)."

Porn as Art

Because naked in public is awesome!!

sex is 20%
dirty word!!!

I Q
omen Porn
Wall

MALE
GAZE!

oops kind of
saggy boobs

Oh Baby what
big mellons you
have!!

big thighs, like
your mom's

WOMEN
LOVE
PORN TOO!!!

my dick is
a bit small,
but boy
can I use it

Don't
cry
because
the Bro
more porn

oh baby!
you're so wet!

I'm even
knowing
about
clamps

hipple ring

harder
daddy

R.I.P.
omen
porn
wall

smooth

Whateley

what's good on a pie but not a vagina??

- A CRUST!!!! sharksook Rita Boats

fiddle

Bad Bad
Lesbian
Porn (AKA
what I'd like to
do w/ Rebecca)

In memory of the Omen Porn wall
created lovingly 1.5 years ago By Ben Day and Gabe Mace